

THE SPUR OF FATE

By Ashley Towne

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CHAPTER XIV. THE FATE OF AN ADVISER.



WHEN Korna returned for them, a sufficient number of the maps were completed. That they would be of any use whatever Darrell was not so sanguine as to believe. He recognized, however, the courtesy of the Cirenssian general who had suggested something for him to do.

Korna viewed them with great respect and put them carefully into his pocket.

"The men have been chosen," he said, "subject, of course, to the khan's approval," and he submitted a list of names. "We can get no word of any considerable force of the enemy approaching from the north. Beyond question some obstacle has been encountered. Our scouts hear rumors of a disaster on the railroad, but there seems to be very little basis for the report."

"These names are good," said Vera. "All your arrangements are approved. Here are my orders in duplicate for the men."

Korna received the papers and withdrew.

"Would your excellency favor me also with a copy of the order?" asked Darrell, and Vera tossed him a duplicate which lay upon the table rolled up tightly and secured by cord and seal.

"What do you intend?" she asked. "I have passed through their lines once," he said. "It seemed possible that with your permission I might do it again."

"You will take no such risk," she replied. "When lives are to be staked for Cirenssia, we shall find Cirenssians in plenty to do it."

"I surrendered to a German at the fall of Gredskov," said Darrell, "and a mighty good fellow he was too."

"There are mercenaries in every army," Vera rejoined. "We have hired a few expert soldiers where we could find them, but most of us fight for the cause."

"The freedom of Cirenssia," said Darrell.

"The freedom of Cirenssia," responded Vera, as if it were a toast.

Darrell drew a deep breath and squared his shoulders with the air of one who meets an emergency.

"Cirenssia lies some distance to the westward of us," he said. "Is it your intention to annex this province?"

"The men of this region have not risen with us," replied Vera. "They deserve no part in our liberty."

"I am imperfectly informed about your early successes," said Darrell. "You must have made short work of the Russian garrisons in Cirenssia."

"They fled before us like sheep," cried Vera. "They fled to their fort, along the coast and the river."

"And you reduced all those strongholds in so short a time?" he responded. "It is marvelous."

"General Nirkhigi is in command of our army in the west," said Vera. "We have not yet heard of his success. He moved westward, raising levies as he went. We believe that by this time Anapa has fallen before him and that the Black Sea coast is ours."

"Anapa is a strong place," said Darrell. "Of course I do not know what strength your general was able to bring against it; but, considering the support of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, I am afraid you are too sanguine."

"We fear nothing in that quarter," answered Vera. "We have hastened to carry the war into the enemy's country, and you have seen how Russia has felt the weight of our sword."

"She laid her hand upon the jeweled weapon beside her. Darrell's heart gleamed within him.

"This is a wonderfully efficient force," he said. "Such of your men as I have seen appear to be armed and disciplined as well as the crack regiments of France or Germany. Cirenssia gained a fighting reputation sixty or seventy years ago, and the world has not forgotten it. Indeed one need not go back so far. And yet I am bound to say that if an angel had come down to tell me that such troops as these could come out of your country I would have asked for evidence. How could Russia have been blind to your designs?"

"The credit belongs to Kizlar," answered Vera. "He has been secretly at work for a long time, and it was he who threw dust in the eyes of the czar."

"Unless I am misinformed," said Darrell, "he was Russia's ranking general in your country and for all practical purposes its governor. Therefore he is now doubly a traitor in the eyes of the czar."

"He stakes his life upon the success of our cause," replied Vera.

"And what has been your part in this warlike venture?" asked Darrell.

"You were so good as to speak in praise of the arms of our troops," she answered. "Nearly all our modern weapons, including a large part of the cannon and the ammunition of all kinds, were purchased by me in France, and it was I who planned their secret shipment. That was my mission in Paris."

"And it accounts for the visit of M. Clery."

"He was of great use to me," said Vera. "I think he took an especial interest in the matter because of the novelty of dealing with a woman. He flattered me by saying that I was absolutely a freak of nature in my capacity for understanding the material of war."

"I think he did you no more than justice," said Darrell. "It was a tremendous task to buy this armament, and, by the way, it must have cost a lot of money. I can hardly understand how your revolutionary treasury could have furnished the amount."

"When I came down to Stavropol," said Vera, "to obtain the funds hidden

by my father, I chanced upon the secret of a treasure laid up long ago for the needs of Cirenssian patriots. That such a fund had once existed was known, but no one knew what had become of it in the disasters following our last struggle, more than thirty years ago. The story is long. Suffice it to say that I chanced upon the secret, and the treasure was recovered. It was at that time that I first met Prince Kizlar."



"A small matter to me!"

zlar, who had sought the treasure vainly. He set my heart on fire with prophecies of my country's freedom. He told me that my descent from the most noble family of Cirenssia would win the hearts of the people and make me a queen. Yet you must not think that I was moved by personal ambition."

"I am far from that error," answered Darrell. "Of the two treasures thus discovered you at least were pure gold. As to the other, did it pass into Kizlar's custody?"

Vera shook her head.

"I did not then trust him to that extent," she said. "A revolutionary committee was formed, and to that body I revealed the secret. The money has been disbursed under the warrant of that committee."

"I commend your prudence," said Darrell.

Vera looked at him steadily and with a severely perceptible smile.

"Prince Kizlar is a hasty man," she said. "When he had you in his power, his natural impulse—natural as a tiger's—was to put you out of the way. Your methods differ from his. You are the coldest blooded man I ever met, and he is one of the most fiery. But which is the more unjust?"

Darrell's face flushed painfully, yet he still wore an air of calm, still spoke as if the conversation dealt with an abstract problem outside the field of personal interest.

"You are mistaken if you suppose that I am trying to do Prince Kizlar an injury," he rejoined. "That he tried to take my life is as small a matter to me as it is to you. I—"

"A small matter to me!" echoed Vera, her hand clapping on the hilt of the sword. "If he had succeeded and you had looked down from the stars afterward, I think the wrath of your spirit would have been satisfied. But now that he has failed and you are safe he remains merely Kizlar, Cirenssia's best soldier and at heart a good patriot."

"A bad man cannot be a good patriot," answered Darrell. "He cannot be a good anything, except perhaps a good soldier, as this man is. The trade requires no conscience. I saw Kizlar commit a murder for greed and attempt another for mere anger, and that stamps him indelibly in my eye. But for his own personal merits he is nothing to me. It is only because his character affects your personal safety and the success of the cause to which you have devoted yourself that I speak of him."

"My personal safety is not worth speaking of," replied Vera, "except as it may affect the cause. Yet you are insane to suppose that Kizlar's absurd love for me is in any way a menace."

"I had not that in mind," answered Darrell earnestly. "It is the conduct of this war that makes me shudder for you, that forces me to warn you, though I have neither right nor authority to do so."

"And what have you to say of the conduct of the war?" she asked. "Have we not met with success?"

"Vera," he said, "what is the object of this struggle?"

"To free my country."

"Is it free? Have you driven the Russians out of it?"

"We shall," she cried, "and in the meantime—"

"In the meantime," said Darrell, "you are engaged in an utterly hopeless war of invasion. What was your hope in this campaign? To take Stavropol? I will grant that you might conceivably succeed. Even so, you could not have dreamed of going farther, and you certainly could not have expected to hold the place indefinitely without anything that could be called a line of communications, without possibility of reinforcement, with only the resources of the city itself to depend upon. A successful retreat would have been your best expectation."

"Why not then?" demanded Vera, rising. "Do you think our successes would have won us no consideration?"

"Not on Russian soil," answered Darrell. "Every success you win outside your own borders is an obstacle in the way of your liberty. You cannot conquer Russia. Your only chance was to persuade her that the reconquest of Cirenssia at this time would cost too much in men and treasure. What does the government in St. Petersburg care about the loss of Gredskov as a military incident? Nothing. But as an act demanding reprisals the taking of that city assumes importance. It is the same with Vladikavkas, and the taking of Stavropol would make your cause hopeless."

"Prince Kizlar does not think so," said Vera, pale with excitement.

"Prince Kizlar has never had any other opinion," rejoined Darrell. "He is a soldier, a man of long experience in war, familiarly acquainted with Russian governmental policy. Vera, when such a man moved your army beyond

the boundary of the country you were fighting to free he proved that he was not a patriot. The soldier of freedom resents aggression. He takes up arms for the purpose of expelling tyrants; he defends his own land; he stands up on his rights and strives to win the respect of the world. But to rush out of his own country, leaving his strongest fortified places still in the hands of the intruder, to invade the territory of a monstrous power like Russia, with no hope except to inflict a certain amount of injury and then withdraw—this could not be the act of a trained soldier who was also a patriot. To Kizlar the military principles and the policies involved were plain as one plus one makes two. He did not organize this campaign in the interests of Cirenssia."

"In whose, then?" she cried.

"In his own, Vera," replied Darrell. "For loot. There was a rich treasure in Gredskov, imperfectly guarded through Russian oversight. Kizlar knew of it, and now he has it absolutely in his hands."

"Why not?" demanded Vera. "Will not money help our cause?"

"My child," he rejoined, without meaning to use the term which made the princess red with wrath, "is it conceivable that Russia will permit you to hold this sum? It is a mere item in the bill that you must settle. Your whole policy should have been to secure the easiest terms, and this is the way to get the hardest. Your only problem was this: How much can I make if I cost Russia to retake Cirenssia in proportion to the injury which she has suffered in the loss of it? The lighter the injury the better for you."

"I have heard that the Americans considered money above all things," Vera began, but Darrell interrupted her with a groan.

"Let me hasten to make an end of this," he cried. "I have not forgotten your regard and suffered the misery that torments a gloomy prophet without a definite object. You will send an order to Prince Kizlar. It is not too late to change your plan. I would have your force and his move westward, effecting a junction at the earliest possible moment. The Russian force south of you is unprepared for such a movement and is, besides, hampered by its own anxieties, due to failure of the co-operating force to come down from the north. You will have no difficulty. You can withdraw into Cirenssia without loss, and then you can use this really admirable army for defense of your country."

"It is the policy of cowardice!" exclaimed Vera. "Why, you yourself admit that these Russians south of us are caught in a trap. By your own report they are scarcely equal in number to my command in this city. Shall I run away while they are quaking in their boots, or shall I crush them between two millstones?"

"If your sole thought is for Cirenssia," said Darrell, "you will avoid a victory that cannot seriously weaken but only embitter your enemy."

"Really," said the princess, "I am both ashamed and grieved. I hoped for help and bold counsel from you, and instead you—"

"I have given you the best counsel I had," answered Darrell sadly. "Now give me a gun and post me in the front rank, and if the march is on to Stavropol I will cheer the order."

But Vera did not seem to hear him. She rapped upon the table with her sword, and the orderly appeared.

"See who is there," said the princess. Several officers entered hastily, as if upon important errands. There was with them a man, in the dress of a Russian peasant, who seemed, however, to be a soldier of Cirenssia. He was much the worse for hard travel and tattered with weariness. Vera gave him a quick glance and acknowledged his salute. Then she turned to Darrell, saying coldly:

"We will speak later of your return to Paris."

Darrell bowed most respectfully and retired from the room.

CHAPTER XV. THE ADVENTURE OF THE PIPER.

IN the room to which the two men had been assigned on their arrival in the city Colonel Korna found Darrell some minutes after that unfortunate individual had been dismissed by the princess.

"I suppose that was English you were speaking as I entered," said the colonel. "I do not understand it."

"That is well for your soul," returned Darrell. "The language was violent."

"What was the matter?" asked Korna, and then without waiting for an answer, "What are you going to do with that thing?"

This question referred to the faded cloak which Darrell had taken from the idiot, Musaf.

"I have made a fool of myself, Colonel Korna," said the American. "I have not asked me how, but take my word that it was done in a way that the most brainless monkey ever born in a tree could not have bettered. Having done it, I was naturally reminded of this idiot's belongings. Do you suppose there is any beeswax in Vladikavkas?"

"Is that question a part of your disguise?" laughed Korna, for Darrell had put on the cloak and taken up the pipes upon which Musaf had played.

Darrell convinced Korna that he was serious, whereupon the latter replied that it would be singular if a town of the size of Vladikavkas contained no beeswax, but he did not know just where it could be found.

"We have had great news," he added. "A spy has come down all the way from Stavropol. The report of the railway wreck which has delayed the Russian force is confirmed. Moreover—"

"I am out of favor with the khan," said Darrell, interrupting. "I do not feel that I should listen to your military secrets."

Korna stared, and then, seeing that Darrell was serious, he was about to express his sympathy when he was hastily summoned to the khan's presence.

Darrell put away the cloak and pipe and went out into the town, where he

found many small stores open, for there was excellent order in the place, and secured without great difficulty a supply of beeswax and black goat's hair, with which he built up a beard almost as wild as Musaf's. A beard constructed in this way by a man experienced in the art will bear close inspection. Having completed his task, he wrote a note to Korna in these words:

My Dear Colonel—I am going to try to get through the Russian lines with a copy of the khan's order to Prince Kizlar. If I am not heard of within ten days, will you please inform the khan of my attempt. I would have your natural silence for that interval. If you can do so without serious inconvenience, and if I do not return I would have you remember me pleasantly, as I shall remember you so long as I taste the faculty.

He left this where Korna would find it and then, mounted upon a grotesque little mule that he had purchased, made his way out through the Cirenssian lines, the seal of the khan upon the order that he bore being his warrant.

The mule was a sturdy brute, and, though Darrell made a wide detour, so that he seemed to be coming up from the east, it was not later than 3 o'clock in the afternoon when he was halted by Russian pickets upon the right wing of their force.

An utter recklessness had taken possession of Darrell since his wretched interview with Vera. He had ridden along the road rehearsing the denunciation of Musaf as he had observed it, practicing the peculiarities of speech that had distinguished the idiot and fitting crack-brained jests from his own memory to the language in which they must be uttered.

He had given some attention also to the pipes, but found it easier because of his especial aptitude to imitate the sound of the instrument than to play upon it.

When the picket cried out "Halt!" Darrell coughed the mule's ear and cried "Halt!" to him in an excellent copy of the Russian soldier's tone, whereat another soldier laughed. Meanwhile the mule kept straight on and did not stop until the soldiers had him by the bridle, one on each side.

"It is Musaf the Traveller," said the soldier who had laughed. "I have seen him in Stavropol."

If Darrell had been in a humor favorable to fear, this utterance would have alarmed him seriously. He had not attempted a personation. It was impossible that he should be mistaken for Musaf by any one who had more than the feeblest recollection of the original. It had not occurred to Darrell's mind that the imbecile could have so wide a fame. His sole idea had been to take the guise of a harmless character. If detected as a counterfeiter, he might expect a spy's fate.

"I don't remember you," he said, "but still you may have seen me. I played under the windows of the jail."

It was the other soldier's turn to laugh, and he welcomed the chance. His comrade took the jest without offense.

"It was through a window that I saw you," he said, "but the window of a grogshop, not a jail."

"It seems I was a little early for you with my serenade," rejoined Darrell. "I'll give it to you now if you'd like to hear it."

He put the pipe to his lips and played a few notes.

"Here, quit that!" cried one of the soldiers. "We're close to the lines, and the noise may be heard."

"You have no ear for music," said Darrell. "Get along!" the last words being addressed to the mule.

The soldiers had let go of the bridle and had stepped aside. The animal started with alacrity, for Darrell had learned how to appeal to him with a touch of the heel.

"Halt! Come back here!" cried the Russians in, and one of them threw a stick that lay handy beside him. It missed Darrell and by good luck hit the mule. Secretly encouraged by his rider, the brute ran away, but at no very great speed.

"Don't shoot. I'll catch him!" exclaimed one of the Russians, and Darrell, looking back, saw him coming, while the other, rifle in hand, was now unable to fire, even if he had wished to do so, because of the risk of hitting his comrade.

Darrell urged the mule to better speed. The running soldier halted, calling out a threat, but at that moment Darrell reached the crest of a little rise in the road and saw ahead of him, at no great distance, an advanced portion of the Russian line. Ten seconds more and he knew the picket would not dare to shoot.

"I'm stopping him!" he called, making a great feint of struggling with the bridle rein, and the soldier, seeing that the mule's pace was slackening, lowered his gun.

"It's all right!" Darrell shouted over his shoulder. "I've got him now. I'm safe."

And having brought the mule to a more moderate pace, he sat up straight in the saddle and, putting the pipe to his lips, rode on, discoursing weird, uncanny music. Soldiers were advancing toward him; behind him the picket, swearing and laughing at the same time, waved a signal to the squad beyond and tapped his forehead to denote the mental condition of this extraordinary rider.

Darrell was soon surrounded, but by cleverly playing his role he escaped being sent back. The squad took him into the lines, and he was bandying rough jests with them when an officer advanced, commanding silence.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Excellent!" responded Darrell. "I have come to dinner."

He slid off the mule's back and leaped against the animal as if too weak to stand. Then in response to questions he told in a crack-brained fashion the story of wandering that he had carefully prepared, founded upon the possibilities of Musaf's character. He had traveled with a caravan; he had left it and had lost his way. All the houses by the road were empty. He had found no one to give him food.

"I believe the fellow is really starving," said the officer. "Let him have something to eat. Search him, however."

Darrell was searched, but nothing was found.

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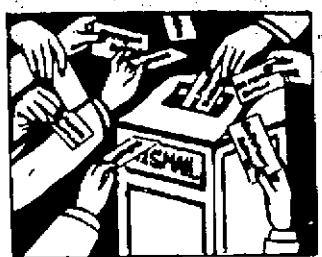
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HOT RACE TO NEW ORLEANS

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FARRAGUT'S fighting ships weighed anchor soon after midnight April 24, 1862, and by 3 o'clock a. m. were making the first dash toward carrying out the orders to "proceed up the Mississippi river." A French admiral and a British captain had sailed up stream the evening before and talked with the Confederate commanders at Fort Jackson and Fort Philip, the heavy armed citadels which guarded the channel. They told Farragut that it would be impossible for his wooden ships to pass the barriers of obstructions the enemy had placed in his way and live through the fire of the forts.

Farragut had 192 guns mounted on seventeen wooden war sloop and gunboats. The enemy could bring to bear 120 guns on land and forty in batteries about. Below Fort Jackson, the first fortress, a line of anchored hulks bound together with iron chain cables had completely obstructed the channel until the night of the 20th, when Farragut's chief of staff, with the crews of a couple of gunboats, had cut a passage through them under fire. Through

large enough to blow the sloop out of water, landed in the Brooklyn's timbers, but did not explode because the Confederate gunners in their hurry had failed to remove the lead patch from the exploding fuse. Passing on and leaving the Louisiana, the Brooklyn got a blow from the rain Minnassas and at the same time a shot from the ram which smashed through the planking and lodged in a sand bag barricade. The ram lay so low in the water that the Brooklyn's guns could not strike her.

It was still dark and the river reeled in smoke. One strange ship which passed the Brooklyn close on the port side would have been sent to the bottom by a broadside, but at the moment of firing a voice on the deck of the sloop called out: "Don't shoot! It's the troquois!" The order was obeyed, and thus the Confederate gunboat Melina, whose captain had just been killed by a shot from the troquois, got a short lease of life. This incident ended the stirring adventures of the Brooklyn. She had been struck seventeen times in the hull and lost thirty-five men. The wooden ships of the Federal fleet nel-



"GIVE THAT RASCALLY TUG A SHOT!"

this opening the leading division of sloops and gunboats, under Captain Theodor Bailey, steamed cautiously. In passing Fort Jackson the noises on shipboard alarmed the Confederates on shore, and they were ready to welcome Farragut's second division, headed by his flagship Hartford, with a fusillade from the batteries on the bank and from the lofty parapets of the fort. Bailey's ships passed on to Fort Philip, on the opposite bank. The gunners of this fort were driven from their posts by a hot fire of grape and canister before they could cripple the leading ships. Above the fort the Cayuga, Varuna and Onondaga dashed into the enemy's fleet, already moving down stream to meet the invaders. The noise of paddle wheels and the firing of the forts had summoned them to the scene.

Farragut's flagship Hartford alone made the first heavy fight at Fort Philip. Her consort, the Brooklyn, had attempted to pass the gap in the obstructions and keep in line, but owing to the darkness got caught in the hulks by one of her own dangle cables under the fire of Fort Jackson. Some unknown hero ran out and cut the hawser with an ax, and then she swung through the gap into a nest of fire rafts.

The Hartford soon after passing Fort Philip encountered a blazing fire raft which was pushed against her side by a tugboat. Farragut called away his firemen and stood by until they put out the fire, which climaxed half way to the tops. On the burning side the flames drove the Hartford men from their guns, and Farragut shouted: "Don't finish at this fire, boys! Give that rascally little tug a shot! Don't let her escape!" The tug was sunk. Already the Hartford had thirty-two shot holes in her hull and rigging.

While Farragut was fighting fire the Brooklyn lay for a time dead in the current under the guns of Fort Jackson. She would have been blown out of water had the enemy fired low. But their beach guns were out of range, and those on the parapet could not be depressed enough to strike a ship near shore. The Brooklyn opened with shell and shrapnel on the fort and kept it up until the Hartford was clear of the fire raft and her flames extinguished. Then she steamed up the river and headed for the ironclad Louisiana, which lay moored to the bank above Fort Philip. The Louisiana fired a couple of shots at the Brooklyn, then closed her port shutters to receive the Brooklyn's broadsides.

One of the Louisiana's nine-inch shells,

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Phamlin to his spouse, "we've had so much rain lately, I do hope we won't have any more for some time." "I'll tell you how you can make sure of it, pa," said the bright little boy. "Just gimme a quarter to save up for a rainy day, and I'll bet there won't be one for a year."—Philadelphia Press.

Some people are very poor hands to follow the good advice they give.

Sweetheart (cooly). Now, you must take only one, George.

Swain. But one from one leaves nothing. Let's make it one each and tie.

Sweetheart. It's awful sudden, George, but you may ask papa.—New York Times.

If you will notice carefully you will see plenty of \$2.50 hats on a city head as you pass through this world.

THE SPUR OF FATE.

CONTINUED FROM SECOND PAGE.

suspicious was found, for he had prepared himself for such an ordeal. His garments throughout and the emptiness of their ragged pockets belittled the character which he had assumed. Verna's order, tightly rolled, was inside Musel's pipe, but it did not occur to these men's minds that a wind instrument which could be played upon might contain any article contraband.



"It is Musel the Traveler."

of war. It was far beyond their wit to suspect that the man's musk, quite independent of the apparent source of it.

"Feed him and keep an eye on him," was the officer's order, and Darrell obtained food of which he was really much in need. Afterward he was allowed to sleep on a pile of blankets in the rear of the line, where some officers' horses were tethered. A fringe of trees approached near to this spot, a spur of the woods. In the latter part of the afternoon there was a smart and sudden shower. Some of the soldiers sought shelter under the trees, and it was remembered that the demented wanderer went with them, but not a man of that force saw him afterward, except a platoon on the road toward Gredskov, who in the early evening challenged a shadow flitting by in the edge of some bushes, fired upon it and then decided that it must have been a wild animal if, indeed, it was not a product of his own imagination.

At daybreak a Circassian outpost in sight of the walls of Gredskov halted a grotesque and travel worn creature, apparently demented, yet with wit enough to know his own business, and after brief questioning sent him into the city under guard of a single man to find Captain Varnek, for whom he asserted that he had an important message.

If Darrell had declared that his business was with Prince Kibzar, it might have been looked upon as the customary delusion of a "crank," and had he shown the Princess Verna's order at such an early stage of the proceedings other hands than his would probably have delivered it. Therefore he had named Varnek, the officer who had been charged with his execution, whom Korra had described as a friend—certainly a man devoted to the khan and well suited to be Darrell's intermediary in this matter.

It appeared, however, when they were within the city that Captain Varnek was not an easy man to find. Darrell's guide was directed here and there with the greatest positiveness in each case, but always wrongly, and Darrell was on the point of attempting direct communication with Kibzar when the problem was solved in an unexpected manner.

In the open space beside the prison a great crowd was gathered, and as Darrell and his guard passed in the course of their search they heard the sound of music and saw in the midst of the throng a considerable body of troops drawn up in hollow square. Two tall timbers with a crossbar on top seemed to define most distinctly the occasion of this gathering.

"An execution!" asked Darrell. "For what crime?"

"I heard the fellow had assisted the escape of a prisoner condemned by order of the justice," was the reply. "He used to be a turnkey at that prison."

"Did you hear his name?"

"Kevski, or something like that," answered the man indifferently.

"They will hang him?" exclaimed Darrell in horror at the fate of this man to whom he owed his own life.

"By the fact," replied the soldier. "I believe there's some idea of getting a confession out of him, and when you hang a man by the neck he hasn't so much time to think the matter over. I could never understand why people should want to see such a thing." And he pointed to the crowd with a gesture of contempt that did him much credit.

Darrell was already breaking through the crowd, and in half a minute he had come up to the thin line of soldiers by which it was restrained. At that moment the unfortunate Kevski was hoisted up, his feet bound together, the rope by which he was supported being made fast between them. He swung at first but little clear of the ground, his hands bound behind his back, his body slowly twisting on the rope.

This barbarity is not uncommon in that region, and it has a terrifying element of uncertainty, for the amount of torture inflicted by it can never be known in advance, since it depends upon the endurance of the individual. Men have lived incredibly long and have endured indescribable torments, while others have passed beyond pain in a few minutes.

It is always a new wonder to the most experienced that such a spectacle can be given the aspect of an entertainment, yet here was the hand braying as if to gather spectators for a mountebank's performance, and here were the people staring for the best places. Jests were far easier to hear than expressions of sympathy, though these citizens of Gredskov, bred under

an alien rule, had no knowledge of public punishments for justice's sake, but only as the cruelties of an irresponsible tyrant.

The band ceased with a rattle of brass, and the next instant Darrell was inside the line of soldiers, holding to his lips the pipes of Musel, from which there seemed to issue a shrill and lively tune. The thing was so quickly done that no one raised a hand to stop him as he began to march with a crazy dizziness in the direction of the musicians. The crowd laughed, the soldiers waited for an order, and the officers, seeing no harm done, hesitated to give it.

"You do not play so badly," said Darrell, lowering his pipe and addressing the leader of the band, "but my music is much more popular."

He waved his hand in the direction of the crowd, which rewarded him with cheers and laughter. The bandmaster turned an eye upon the colonel of the regiment, who had wheeled his horse in that direction. He was a man of jovial aspect, and he seemed to be somewhat the worse for liquor. Darrell judged him to be not adverse to this comedy and was not deceived when the officer, with a great affectation of wrath, waved his naked sword over the pipe's head and then brought it down with a wide sweep to light, flatwise, on the offender's back. It was not a very safe trick, for the Circassian swords are sharp as razors.

"Upon my word," exclaimed the officer, observing that Darrell did not even wince, "you don't scare easily."

"I haven't sense enough," responded Darrell. "Only the wise are afraid; the others are soldiers."

"You mean that soldiers are fools?" demanded the officer, scrapping this simple jest with some difficulty and uncertainty whether he had got the right of it.

"Not those that wear swords," responded Darrell. "It is wise to order other men to fight; the folly is in obeying. And, by the way, that is a very fine sword of yours."

"What do you know about swords, madman?" demanded the officer.

"More than yourself," replied Darrell, "begging your excellency's pardon, for I can do something with a sword that you can't."

"You are a hoaster?" cried the colonel, raising his weapon.

"I will prove my words," answered Darrell. "Can you play a tune upon a sword?"

"No; nor any other man," retorted the colonel.

"I can play upon a sword as well as on this pipe," answered Darrell. "If you don't believe me, lend me yours." This cool proposition excited laughter among the spectators who were near enough to hear it and also considerable interest, for it seemed that the madman really meant to execute some trick.

"I can't spare it," said the colonel curtly.

"This, then, will answer," rejoined Darrell, and, with a movement swift as conjuring, he snatched a sword from the scabbard of a captain who had advanced as if with some message for his superior.

The man, utterly amazed and perhaps alarmed, started back, and before he had recovered himself Darrell had raised the sword to his lips in the manner of a flute and was piping in a way that might have amazed a higher type of audience. The colonel restrained the enraged captain with a gesture and listened with a drunken wonder that, in less desperate circumstances, would have afforded Darrell much amusement.

Suddenly the wretched prisoner, swinging by the rope, uttered his first cry, a long and pitiable scream. It was what might have been foreseen; indeed, Darrell had expected it earlier. He turned, with an affectation of wrath.

"I can't be interrupted in this way!" he cried, springing toward the tortured man.

It is probable that every one expected to see the supposed madman still Kevski's cry by plunging the sword into his body. The colonel had time to call out:

"Don't strike! Upon your own life!"

And then, before his horse could respond to the spurs, he saw the crazed musician leap up and sever with a blow the rope by which Kevski was suspended. The man fell upon his back, for his head had been drawn up and, the distance being so short, sustained no injury.

Darrell dropped the sword and, seizing the pipes that had dangled by a cord around his neck, broke them across his knee. It was all done in less than a second. He clasped the disarmed captain, the first man to reach him, around the body with a grip that nearly stopped the heart under his ribs and held before his eyes with the free hand the order of the khan, taken from the broken pipes.

"I am the khan's messenger," he whispered. "My order concerns this man." And then aloud, "The seal of the khan!"

Hearing the words and beholding the paper in Darrell's hand and impressed also by the sudden change in his tone and manner, the soldiers that had seized him offered him no great violence, but held him while the captain took Verna's order and gave it to the colonel.

He recognized the seal, battered though it was, and for some seconds he hesitated what course to pursue.

"If you would win the favor of the khan," said Darrell, "you will discount the punishment of this man. The prince will be satisfied when you inform him that the American, Darrell, arrived in Vladikavkas yesterday morning."

"You are sure of this?"

"Absolutely," replied Darrell, "and you may please the prince further with the information that the American has entirely lost the khan's favor."

"You seem to know many things," said the colonel, bending down from the horse and looking closely into Darrell's face; then to a subordinate and pointing to Kevski: "Put that man under guard. This one goes with me before the prince."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CASITORIA.

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Signature of Chas. H. Johnson.

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MALVAR YIELDS

Considered Event of Extraordinary Importance

A RESUMPTION OF TRADE

With the Philippines Among the Provinces of the Future

General Wharton, reporting to the division headquarters, says that all resistance in the department has ended and that the surrenders just announced mean that the ports will be opened and that the Philippines in the detention camps can be allowed to return to their homes in time to fill the void.

General Wharton gives General Bell great credit for his indefatigable energy in conducting the campaign. He was in the field day and night, personally supervising the most arduous operations.

The people of Manila are delighted at the prospect of a resumption of trade with the Philippine provinces and are anxious to see the ports opened.

General Wharton personally requested an interview with General Bell in order to make his complete submission.

The lack of news from the island of Samar is due to a defective cable. It is believed, however, that the American commander there received, yesterday, the surrender of all the insurgents in Samar, unless the planned proceedings were altered.

General Miguel Malvar is one of the most important and best known of the native Filipino leaders. He was General Lawton's most formidable antagonist, and commanded the insurgents in the light of Zepole river, the most serious battle fought in the Philippines. In May, 1901, negotiations for his surrender were under way, but they failed and he announced himself dictator of the Philippine provinces.

Malvar is a Tagal, and a native of the province of Batangas, and was born in his native town of Santa Tomas. He was educated in Manila at the Royal University, and is considered an able and highly cultivated man.

He is, according to his friends, one of the most popular men in his province, and his popularity extends throughout the islands. Although a good general, it is thought by many that he would make a still better statesman, and therefore during peace he would be one of the most prominent men in the Philippines.

He belongs to the best class of Filipinos, and his family is one of the best in the Philippines. He was born in 1853, and is now 48 years of age.

He came over with Aguinaldo and took an active part in the operations in Luzon, he having for some time been engaged in the provinces of Ilocos and Pangasinan. Interesting stories are told of his methods in the field. They say he rarely equipped with his troops—generally with but a friend or two, his Nanay, a wife, a boy to look after him, a carabao and a bull cart. This was the Malvar outfit. Within a mile or so of where he camped, in a circle about the place, were detached columns of 20 or 30 men each. His camp was pitched on the brink of some deep barranca, one of those fissures of the earth that run through the Philippine country. The moment a gun was fired, Malvar disappeared and our troops began the unsatisfactory search for a needle in a haystack. American soldiers long tried to catch him through the striking personality of his wife, Dona Placida, a stout, cross-eyed woman with a masterful voice and a temper. As a result, all the cross-eyed women in Batangas have spent much time in prison, but Dona Placida always escaped.

Malvar was wont to visit towns or army posts dressed like a peasant, with his shirt outside his homespun trousers, riding a carabao with his favorite gamecock under his arm. He came to town in amiable clothes to attend to his own affairs, to hear mass, or to barter with our soldiers for plug tobacco, or to reward the patriots within our lines to pay their assessments to the insurgent treasury. In this guise he has entered Calamba on market day; Lipa, too, when all were celebrating our lady of the rosary. He had passed in and out among thousands of people, each of whom knew him, but his secret was always kept.

Miles to Be Soon Retired

Washington, April 14.—The issues are fairly joined between the lieutenant general and the secretary of war. The troubles which began long ago under the Cleveland administration have finally reached so critical a stage that the compulsory retirement of General Miles at an early date is an open secret and is not denied at the White House.

Two Years For Killing Prince

St. Petersburg, April 15.—Colonel Maximoff has been sentenced to two years' imprisonment for killing Prince Wittgenstein in a duel. The court recommended that the colonel be pardoned.

Not Getting Full Advance

Fall River, Mass., April 15.—A mass meeting of operatives was held last night to discuss the non-payment of the full 10 percent advance in several of the mills. The wage situation was discussed from every standpoint, and much bitterness was shown on account of the failure of the mills to do as they had agreed.

Charged With Embezzlement

Portland, Me., April 15.—D. Mathis, formerly president, treasurer and manager of the Mathis Billiard company, was arrested last night on the charge of embezzlement of \$257.30 from that company. Mathis started two large billiard parlors here and was the owner of baseball and polo teams in 1901. He was admitted to ball in the sum of \$2000.

Elizabeth Whittier Pickard, wife of Samuel T. Pickard and niece of John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet, died at Boston. She was born in Portland, Me.

Two Trainmen Killed

Ansonia, Conn., April 15.—A freight train on the New York, New Haven and Hartford crashed into a switcher near here last night and two of the crew, George Wilmer and Patrick Donovan, were killed. An Italian named Brascio, one of the crew of the switcher, was arrested. His conductor says that he sent the man back to flag the freight and he failed to do so.

A Child's Presence of Mind

Providence, April 14.—Four lives were probably saved by Ida Robinson, aged 10, who, when she found the sleeping rooms in her home to be filled with gas, rushed to the aid of her parents and brothers and gave the alarm in time. The little one fainting when she realized the catastrophe she had averted. The deadly fumes arose from a kitchen stove.

Boatmen Probably Washed to Sea

Chatham, Mass., April 14.—The special patrolmen who were stationed at Monoway to search for the bodies lost in the Monoway lifeboat disaster have given up the task. During all the time that the patrol was kept up, there was never a sign of the position of the bodies, and it is now believed that they all were washed far out to sea.

Goes to Prison For Fourth Term

Betham, Mass., April 15.—George Adams pleaded guilty to three charges of breaking and entering at Weymouth and was sentenced yesterday by Judge Hardy to a term in the state prison of not less than 34 years nor more than 15 years. Adams, for previous breaks, has served three terms in state prison.

Held on Perjury Charge

Boston, April 15.—In the Bennett-Donohue-Lynn Item libel suit trial yesterday O. E. Ross of Philadelphia, a witness, was arrested and held in court for the grand jury on the charge of perjury. Later he was released on bail.

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